



PO Box 1259, Livingston
MT 406-222-0512

ALC

November 2025

Newsletter



Dear Children of God at ALC,

A couple of weeks ago I gathered via Zoom with the other members of the Montana Synod Hunger Team. Our task was to evaluate the applications we had received for grants from the Synod Hunger Fund. We ended up awarding a total of \$12,000 to seven different ministries from across the Synod! These grants went to:

- Lutheran Church of Sunburst for Thanksgiving baskets
- Our Redeemer's, New Life, and Saint John's Evangelical Lutheran in Helena to provide for their campaign to raise the funds needed to provide milk for the weekend food pack for students in Helena and several surrounding communities
- Bethany Lutheran in Dutton to provide food baskets to families
- Our Saviors in Laurel for their holiday food drive
- Family Promise in Missoula to provide monthly community meals
- Peace Lutheran in Billings for their food pantry
- Atonement Lutheran in Billings for their work of supporting teen food pantries in area middle schools

What a wonderful thing to be able to give this financial support to ministries that are doing incredible work to feed their hungry neighbors! These sorts of hunger ministries are becoming more and more important for families who are struggling to put food on their tables. I'm really grateful that these ministries exist to care for our neighbors.

A couple of Sundays ago, I got to worship with one of the churches that received a grant, Atonement Lutheran in Billings.

Their pastor shared with great joy that they had received \$3,000 from the Synod Hunger Fund to support the work they are doing to help food pantries in three area middle schools. They were so excited to be able to have these funds that would allow them to grow and deepen this ministry.

None of this would be possible without the support of our congregation and other congregations and individuals across the Montana Synod who have helped to raise money for the Synod Hunger fund! THANK YOU!!! Special thank you to all of you who donated to our July benevolence to support the Synod Hunger Fund, those who donated to sponsor individual bike riders, all the people who biked the Dough For Daily Bread ride in July, those who supported those who biked, all the picnic attendees who helped the bike riders celebrate their ride, Karla who helped with much of the organizing, and Dale who led the BBQing.

Thanks to your participation and generosity, more of our neighbors across the synod won't have to worry about where their next meal is coming from. This is a beautiful example of how the work of the broader Church allows us to do so much more together than any one church could do on its own. Together as a Church \$41,768 has been given towards working to end hunger in communities across the Synod! While I continue to pray that hunger would end, in the meantime I'm grateful that together we can demonstrate God's love in this way.

Peace,

Pastor Melissa



Lord, Jesus Christ

originally published in the "Hungering Dead" by Frederick Buechner

THOU SON OF THE MOST HIGH, Prince of Peace, be born again into our world. Wherever there is war in this world, wherever there is pain, wherever there is loneliness, wherever there is no hope, come, thou long-expected one, with healing in thy wings.

HOLY CHILD, whom the shepherds and the kings and the dumb beasts adored, be born again. Wherever there is boredom, wherever there is fear of failure, wherever there is temptation too strong to resist, wherever there is bitterness of heart, come, thou blessed one, with healing in thy wings.

SAVIOR, be born in each of us who raise our face to thy face, not knowing fully who we are or who thou art, knowing only that thy love is beyond our knowing and that no other has the power to make us whole. Come, Lord Jesus, to each who longs for thee even though we may have forgotten thy name. Come quickly. Amen.

"...thy love is beyond our knowing..." and when Pastor Melissa asked me to do that "English-teacher-thing" and try to find words for this month's newsletter, I picked an idea from "thought of the day" by Fredrick Buechner. Of course, I thought I would think about what might be "love beyond knowing..." Of course I began the necessary petting, feeding, and emphasizing to my Lutheran dogs that my love, as well, is beyond their knowing. These thoughts began my idea of how this might come together and what I might say. In the end, the dogs agreed...and ate their dinner.

I was born in Livingston's hospital, baptized here at American Lutheran...ALC. I attended Sunday school at ALC, (believe me, sitting on FREEZING metal chairs in the Sunday school rooms was no small achievement!) I was confirmed at ALC. With wonderful church leaders and chaperones, several high school classmates worked for a year and a half to earn enough money to travel together and attend the Lutheran Youth Convention in New

Orleans. I attended marriages and funerals sitting in the same pews, and it was ALC that gave me the courage, insight, and deep personal growth and tremendous staff and role models that encouraged me to be both camper and staff member at Christikon for three summers. It was ALC, its pastors and other church leaders, who helped me hold on to the courage to both attend and ultimately graduate from Concordia, a college dedicated to the Christian life. With much thoughtful prayer and wonderful faith and friendships, I became an EGLESH TEECHURE in Wilton, ND. I worshipped at a Lutheran country church in Wilton, and while spending the first eleven wonderful years at what would end up being my life's work...I found a need to come home. And so it was that led to twenty-three amazing years of teaching EENGLISH at PARC HI. Every day I was able to embrace students, family, friends and mountains. All of this was done with deep loving, and learning, and being held tightly with care beyond my knowing, by members of ALC. So now I try to write an article that offers and acknowledges a continued gift from this church. In my retirement, I have again found strength, help, love and support beyond my knowing. With this gift, I pray we all might find time to praise and greet, pray and sing, laugh and commune, AND MORE...as a church family together at ALC. And as I, and so many of you, find time and opportunity to look, both back and ahead, to give and receive love for all we have come to know as our church family...may we always pray and accept ways to be made whole and understand, dear Lord, as "thy love is beyond our knowing."

--Lynnette Evanson

Electronic Giving

Whether you choose to give online or in person, your support is vital to the continued ministry of our church community. We are so grateful for your generosity and commitment to our shared mission. Thank you for your continued support of ALC!



Donation envelopes are also available in the church hallway.

Building Task Force Update

The Dream Team gave a presentation to the congregation on Sunday, October 26. We are looking forward to hearing from YOU! Two listening sessions are scheduled for Tuesday, 10/28 @Perk on Park@9am and Wednesday, 11/5 @1@the Gem. Additional written feedback or questions can be placed in the box at the back of the church. We want to know what your thoughts are!

Remember In Prayer

Randy and Linda Holland
Mike and Vicky Ryles
Holly Happe
Carole Fagerli
Anita Bueling
Lynnette Evanson
Bea Huber
Doug Linsted
Dennis Springer
And their caregivers



We continue to serve the evening meal at Loaves & Fishes on the third Monday of each month (that's **November 17th** this month). If you would be willing to help, please let Pastor Melissa or Cookie Linsted know or just come down to Loaves & Fishes at 10am and/or 3:30pm. In

October 43 meals were served. Thank you to our faithful crew for feeding the hungry in our community.

Council Minutes, October 7

Financials: Financial reports were accepted.

Pastor's Report: The AED training was attended by 12 people. Play Space has been well attended. Annette will be on vacation November 10-17.

Old Business

Benevolence: October is Park High Angel Fund, November is for the Community Thanksgiving Dinner, and December will be given to Elks Holiday Food Baskets.

Building & Grounds: The handicap entrance needs to be resheeted and new gutters due to water running behind the current product. CTA Architects will be contacted regarding the stabilizing of the sanctuary walls.

Committee Reports:

Building Usage: No new developments.

Dream Team: Will have presented to the congregation on October 26 ideas to explore for use of the building, how these are part of our mission, financing, and possibilities for moving forward.

Safety & Security: The council will continue to work with the police department. Curt and Nancy will continue to work on this also.

Utilities Labeling: Karla and Dennis are working on this.

New Business

Personnel Committee will meet during the first part of November to plan staff evaluations.

Finance Committee is starting to work on the 2026 budget.

Nominating Committee: Lynnette will find 2 other members to assist with the 2026 nominations.

Next meeting: Sunday, November 9 after worship.

Annual meeting is January 25. Reports are due January 6.



Agape Circle is a women's Bible study based on the reading from the Gather magazine. Agape meets monthly either at church or in group member's homes. The November gathering will be on **Thursday the 20th at 7:00 pm** at Diane Mueller's home.

Salvation Army Bell Ringing

It's time once again to assist our neighbors in need by ringing the bells by the kettles at the Christmas Stroll on December 5th and at Town & Country on December 19 & 20. Be looking for the signup sheet on the volunteer board or leave a message at the church, 406-222-0512.



**Bell Ringers
Needed!**

ALC Lutheran World Relief Quilting

We continue to need the following items. These can be put either in the quilting room downstairs or in the room just off the entrance of the church.

- New or lightly worn blankets twin-size or larger. Colored or printed (no white)
- New or lightly worn FLAT Sheets twin size or larger. Colored or printed (no white)
- Thread
- Yarn (no cotton)
- Cotton or Flannel fabric

We also have over 50 "kits" for tops ready to be sewn. (You can take these home and sew at your leisure.)

Thank you again for your continued support. For additional information please contact Diane Mueller.

Directory Update

The directory will be updated in November. Please check your name address and see if there have been any changes. Directory information will **NOT** be shared outside of the congregation. Also, if you know of any changes for those who is unable to attend, please let Annette know. Thanks!



Shout Out and thank you to those who are making a difference in our community and church! These people and their stewardship are examples of God's loving grace. (Remember you can submit something for the shout outs at any time to alclivingston@gmail.com).

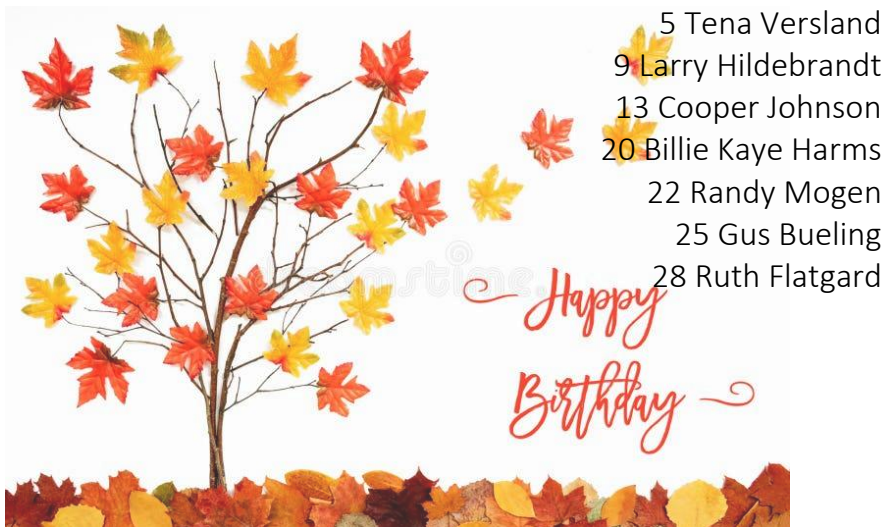
Shout out to...

- ★ Huge shout out to the ALC council members for their dedication to our church and congregation. They are diligent in their efforts to accomplish the tasks brought before them. They are willing to do what is necessary to keep our church operational and moving forward with growth and outreach into our community. They thrive to do what is best for the church building as well as the congregation. They also welcome feedback from the congregation. Thank you to all members of the council.
- ★ The members of the ALC council for being flexible and assuming new roles as needs of former council members change.
- ★ Lana for helping to make dinner for the students who are part of Table and Grace Campus Ministry at MSU. Thank you for providing dinner for the students to nourish them during midterms and to give the students an opportunity to gather together for fellowship.
- ★ The Dream Team for their faithful work in exploring possible future use of the church building. Thank you for helping us discern what God might be calling us to do to share good news in our community.
- ★ Lana for her work in helping us get bids for the last couple of building maintenance items that will be completed this year. Thank you for helping us take care of the church building.

- ✧ Jane and Leslie for welcoming a group of students from Concordia College who spent the night at ALC on their way to volunteer in Helena to help build a Habitat for Humanity house. Thank you for showing these students hospitality and for making sure they had a good and comfortable place to rest on their journey to go be Jesus' hands and feet.
- ✧ The quilters of ALC for their extra work over the past weeks to make sure materials don't go to waste and to make as many quilts as possible. Thank you for helping to show God's love for all people around the world.
- ✧ The ALC Mission Endowment Committee (Dale G, Anna, Leslie, Larry, and Bonnie B) for their faithfulness in the work of this committee. Thank you for your stewardship of this fund which enables ALC to continue its ministry.
- ✧ Dale G and Annette for coordinating with Graybeals to ensure the furnaces in the sanctuary were functioning properly. Thank you for helping to make sure we could worship comfortably.
- ✧ Dale G and Annette for helping to address the fly infestation in the sacristy.

November Birthdays

(If anyone is missing please let Annette know)





ALC-WELCA met on Sunday, October 12 following worship. WELCA is a community of women here at ALC who are committed to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, society, and the world.

The following agenda items were discussed:

- The Treasurer reported our checking account balance of \$3,111.81.
- The quilters have been cleaning and sorting the fabric and supplies... ready to begin the construction of the quilts for LWR In January. **Thank you!! This has been extremely helpful!!**
- ALC will cook at Loaves & Fishes on Monday, October 20 and again November 17.
- Member updates were shared.
- Members were again encouraged to sign up for Altar Care.
- Discussion was held, and the decision was made to again to come together as a congregation and prepare Norwegian Goodies that will be preordered. The preparation dates have been set for meatballs, cabbage salad, and lefse.

SAVE THE DATES!! Your help is invaluable!! It is such a FUN time having all of us working together preparing these goodies

- o Thursday, Nov. 6, 9 am – Meatball Making
- o Thursday, Nov. 13, 9 am – Salad Making
- o Thursday, Nov. 20, 9 am – Lefse Making
- o Friday, Nov. 21, 9 am – Packaging
- o Saturday, Nov. 22, 9am-12noon – Pick up orders
- WELCA will be giving special donations and funds made to local non-profits. That will be determined at the December WELCA meeting.
- A reminder...Thankofferings will be offered Sunday, December 7. Our next meeting will be **Sunday, November 2** following worship. We would love to have you join us!!

Worship Teams

Thank you for switching places with someone when you are unable to make your scheduled time!

November 2 Diane Mueller

November 9 Jane Haugen & Dana Latsch

November 16 Cookie Linsted & Anna Smith

November 23 Jim & Bonnie Evanson

November 30 Dale Siegle & Dan Rhodes

December 7 Billie Roberts, Anna Smith, & Karla Pettit

December 14 Ian & Jenna Flatgard

December 21 Verne & Leslie Beffert

December 24 Dennis & Kitty Springer

December 31 Don & Lana Sheen



Thank Yous



Much thanks to good folks at ALC for continued faithful support and partnership with Christikon. Your recent gift of \$1425 helps sustain our ministry.

Christikon is more than a place—it's a community where lives are shaped and faith is deepened. Witness the ways God is at work through

Christikon, impacting children, adults, families, and those who are at risk or on the margins. Also, witness the ways Christikon helps prepare future church leaders. Your generosity helps ensure this legacy continues. Because of your support, campers and staff experience the power of God's love in life-changing ways.

In Christ,

Pastor Heather T. Wyzdahl

Executive Director

Christikon Clips

November 2025

Information for our Congregations

We celebrated Pastor Heather Wigdahl's installation as Executive Director in October. Thank you to all who attended or sent words of encouragement and congratulations.



The 2025 Annual Meeting will be held on **Sunday November 16th at 3:00pm**. Join us as we share stories from the summer, look ahead to the 2026 season, and provide exciting updates. This hybrid gathering will take place both **in person at Big Timber Lutheran Church** and **via Zoom**.

Our **2026 summer calendar** is now posted at christikon.org. Registration opens **January 6, 2026**. If you have questions about the upcoming season or want to plan your visit to the mountains, we'd love to hear from you!

New for 2026:

Plans are underway for an **Artist-in-Residence Contemplative Retreat** and a **Music Backpacking Adventure**—unique opportunities to experience creativity, faith, and wilderness together. Stay tuned or reach out through christikon.org to learn more.

Additional **backpacking and retreat opportunities** will be available through **September 2026**. Family, adult, and specialty groups can choose 2-, 3-, or 4-night adventures during the week or over a long weekend. Retreat options will now include **optional meals in** addition to lodging—perfect for a relaxing fall getaway at camp.

We continue to hold you in prayer as we navigate these uncertain times together. We trust in—and give thanks for—our God who never lets us go, no matter what life brings. May God bless you and yours as we move through fall and into the holiday season and new year with renewed hope and peace.

Thank you as always for all the ways you support Christikon.
It is the mission of Christikon to awaken and nurture faith in Christ— exploring God's creation and the adventure of life together.

CHRISTIKON • 1108 24th Street West • Billings, MT 59102
406 656-1969 • secretary@christikon.org • www.christikon.org

A Table in the Wilderness

In Psalm 78:19 the people of Israel, while wandering in the desert and wondering if God will take care of them, ask, “Can God spread a table in the wilderness?”



The college and young adult years often resemble the wilderness wanderings of the Israelites. Students are trying to figure out who they are, who their people are, what their purpose is, and who God is, among other things. It's a time when the faith of their youth is tested, when they are stretched in a way they have not been before, when they genuinely wonder whether or not this God they have heard about their whole lives will show up when needed most.

In the midst of this wilderness period our campus ministry “spreads a table.” This table is the manifestation of grace in the wilderness. It is a place to be fed. It is a space to belong. It is a moment to remember that God does indeed show up.

“Can God spread a table in the wilderness?” Absolutely. No question. I witness it over and over again.

What I marvel at even more is how God does this. God spreads this table through the generous hearts and capable hands of our volunteer cooks each Wednesday. God spreads this table through the students who extend invitations to classmates and serve food to those in need in our community. God spreads this table through our extended Table & Grace family who, through their ongoing generosity, provide resources that make this ministry possible.

Thank you for your part in helping us spread the table as we feed students' stomachs and souls week after week. It is an honor and privilege to partner with you and participate in God's work in this way.

Joy & Peace,

JP Carlson

Benevolence

September's benevolence of \$1900 went to Livingston Schools to pay for school supplies. October's benevolence will be going to the Park High Angel Fund.

For November, consider supporting the **Community Thanksgiving Dinner** at the Civic Center or the Elk's Christmas Baskets for December. With the government shut down, those in need of food will be desperate this month without receiving SNAP (food stamps) this month.

Questions?

Whenever you have a question, ASK!! Sometimes a change that may seem minor to some and can be confusing to others.

Why is the "Welcome" sign being moved? The "Welcome" sign has been moved to the bottom of the stairs to make our visitors feel more welcome. One of the items that came up for improvement was that the foyer doesn't feel welcoming and this may help. Also, when CPR/AED training was held, most people weren't aware of where the AED was kept. Now the AED is clearly visible coming up the stairs. The first aid kit is on top of the AED box.

